

CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD  
SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

Order No. 78-68

NPDES PERMIT NO. CA0005657

AMENDING ORDER NO. 76-61 REGARDING  
PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY'S  
(POTRERO POWER PLANT) EFFLUENT  
LIMITATIONS FOR BOILER BLOWDOWN (DISCHARGE 003)

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, (hereinafter called the Board) finds that:

1. Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Potrero Power Plant, hereinafter called the discharger, submitted a report of waste discharge (Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers Permit Application No. 75-OYS-2-003078) dated June 28, 1971. The discharge is presently governed by Order No. 76-61.
2. Discharge 003 contains boiler blowdown from unit 3 and low volume wastes. Metal cleaning wastes associated with unit 3 are neutralized and discharged to the City's sewer system. Boiler blowdown and low volume waste are discharged with the cooling water discharge 002.
3. The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) "Effluent guidelines and Standards for the Steam Electric Power generating Point Source Category" 40CFR 423.32(a), authorizes the State to establish effluent limitations in the NPDES permit either more or less stringent than the limitations established by the Environmental Protection Agency, if the State finds that factors relating to the equipment or facilities involved in the process or other such factors are found to be fundamentally different than those factors considered in the development of the guidelines and standards. The establishment of these alternative limitations requires the approval of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.
4. On November 28, 1977, the discharger submitted a request for variance from EPA effluent limitations in Potrero Power Plant unit 3 boiler blowdown based on fundamental different factors. (Part of Discharge 003). The request was supplemented by testimony and evidence submitted and presented by the discharger at a Regional Board public meeting on August 15, 1978.
5. Based on the evidence received, the Regional Board finds that the boiler blowdown from unit 3 at the Potrero Power Plant is fundamentally different from that considered in the development of the effluent guidelines and standards. The unit 3 boiler blowdown at this plant is discharged at high temperature and pressure directly to the circulating water system. These facilities are different in that the EPA's Development Document for this point source category did not consider either the treatment of high temperature and pressure boiler blowdown waste by a flash tank system for conversion to a manageable liquid waste or the related cost for construction and operation.

6. The boiler blowdown at Potrero Power Plant, under normal operation is within allowable EPA limits. Limits may be exceeded during start-up and passivation operations. However, violation during these two operations may occur less than 1% of time. The installation of equipment to treat the boiler blowdown during these intermittent periods would not justify the resultant minor improvement in discharge quality.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. Section A2 (Effluent Limitations) of Order No. 76-61, adopted by this Regional Board on May 18, 1976, is amended to read as follows:

A. Effluent Limitations

...

2. Waste 003 shall not contain constituents in excess of the following limits:

<u>Constituent</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>30-Day Average</u>	<u>Maximum Daily</u>
a. Total Suspended Solids	mg/l lbs/day	30 1.5	100 5.0
b. Oil and Grease	mg/l lbs/day	15 1.2	20 1.5
c. Total Copper*	mg/l lbs/day	1.0 0.05	1.0 0.05
d. Total Iron*	mg/l lbs/day	1.0 0.05	1.0 0.05

\*Incremental increase above levels in low volume waste stream.

Boiler blowdown from unit 3, included in waste 003, will not be subject to Effluent Limitations A.2 above upon approval by the Administrator of EPA.

I, Fred H. Dierker, Executive Officer, do hereby certify the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of an Order adopted by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Francisco Bay Region, on August 15, 1978.

This Order shall serve as a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit pursuant to Section 402 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act or amendments thereto, and shall take effect at the end of 10 days from date of adoption provided the Regional Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, has no objections.

FRED H. DIERKER  
Executive Officer